

Multimodal Transportation
at the
Franklin Portland Gateway

A report for Hope Community, Inc.

Prepared by Dawn Epperson, Research Assistant
University of Minnesota

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Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA)
University of Minnesota
330 HHH Center
301--19th Avenue South
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455
Phone: (612) 625-1551
Fax: (612) 626-0273
E-mail: cura@umn.edu
Web site: <http://www.cura.umn.edu>

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hope Community, Inc. is an organization located in Ventura Village, a neighborhood within the Phillips community of Minneapolis, just south of downtown, at the intersection of Franklin and Portland Avenues. Hope Community has been active and involved in the neighborhood for over 30 years. Hope's mission is to be "a catalyst for change, growth and safety; building a sustainable neighborhood model through community organization, active education, leadership and affordable housing development." Since 2003 Hope Community, Inc. has built three apartment buildings at the intersection of Franklin and Portland, two mixed income and one completely affordable building, for a total of 126 new housing units. There are plans to begin construction on the fourth building by 2011, adding an additional 120 mixed income housing units to the intersection.

Keeping in line with their mission, Hope is interested in finding ways to best continue the development of the corner while maintaining the priorities of the community. This study, commissioned by Hope Community, Inc., with support from the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, was conducted from September through December of 2009. The purpose of this study is to:

- determine how development and transportation coincide with one another at the Franklin-Portland intersection (also referred to in this paper as "The Gateway")
- explore options for how different modes of transportation can optimally co-exist at the Franklin-Portland intersection
- determine the needs of Hope community regarding transportation and development
- develop recommendations for best balancing the competing needs of multiple modes of transportation at the intersection

Research determined that there are competing transportation needs in the Hope Community. In this paper you will find a detailed description of the multimodal forms of transportation at the Gateway. This paper also includes results from a survey that was administered to members of the Hope Community, along with recommendations for Hope, the City of Minneapolis and Metro Transit. These recommendations include changes that are needed in the neighborhood in order for all modes of transportation to be compatible with one another and to be fully functional to best serve the needs of the community.

METHODS

Research for this project was conducted by a University of Minnesota Graduate Research Assistant. The researcher conducted literature reviews using multiple sources: University of Minnesota on-line libraries, on-line search engines, the City of Minneapolis' web site and informational brochures from various organizations. The researcher met with eight people performing informational interviews. Interviews were held with city planners, public works employees, other community organizations, residents and employees of Hope Community.¹

¹ See Appendix A for full listing of interviewees and other contacts

The researcher completed environmental scans at the intersection of Franklin and Portland Avenues and of the larger Hope Community neighborhood. The purpose of conducting these scans was to determine, first hand, how all modes of traffic (vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle) work at the intersection. Surveys were administered to Hope Community residents, employees and visitors.² The survey was distributed in order to gain insight into understanding what the people who frequent Hope Community want and need in regard to transportation.

HOPE COMMUNITY

History

Hope Community was founded in 1977 as a safe house and shelter for homeless women and children. Although Hope has undergone many changes, Hope's core belief in the power of people and place has never faltered. After witnessing the devastation to the neighborhood caused by the crack cocaine epidemic, Hope shifted focus from the shelter and instead put their time, efforts and resources into neighborhood revitalization. Over the course of many years Hope was able to buy and rejuvenate properties within the community; this included houses, on what is now called Hope Block, and apartment buildings such as the Dundry. Homes were repaired and updated, fences were torn down, playgrounds and outdoor common areas were built and flower gardens were planted. Slowly the violence and destruction began to dissipate. Hope has worked diligently not only to rebuild the physical structures of the neighborhood, but to develop a true sense of community for the residents living in the neighborhood. This has been accomplished through community outreach and education and the development of multiple community partnerships.

The Franklin-Portland Gateway

During a housing shortage in 1999 Hope conceptualized the development of the four abandoned corners at the intersection of Franklin Avenue and Portland Avenue as a possible solution to the neighborhood's housing issue. In addition to giving the neighborhood much needed living space, it was also Hope's wish that the development of the corners would abridge some of the illegal activity that was happening on the corners. Hope partnered with a non-profit developer, Aeon, and the early concept of the Franklin-Portland Gateway was conceived.

The first phase of the Franklin-Portland Gateway was the erection of the Children's Village Center. The first floor of the building houses Hope Community's offices, class rooms, a community center and the property management staff. Neighbors, along with others from within and outside of the community, use the community center for community education and leadership classes, art projects and multiple other events. Thirty six affordable housing units occupy the rest of the building. The second phase of development was the building of The Jourdain Apartments. The Jourdain is comprised of 41 units including one, two and three bedroom apartments, some of which are affordable housing and some of which are market value. The Jourdain also houses a retail market on the main level. The third phase is The Wellstone. The Wellstone is a 49 unit, green building that includes a solar thermal hot water system and rain gardens for storm water management. Seventy five percent of the units are affordable and there are 7,000 square feet of community and (unoccupied) commercial space available on the first

² See Appendix B for complete survey and full results

level of The Wellstone. The final phase of the Franklin-Portland Gateway is the proposed Franklin Steele Commons.

The Next Phase: Franklin Steele Commons

The fourth and final phase of the Franklin-Portland Gateway is Franklin Steele Commons (FSC). The plans for FSC include constructing three buildings on 1.2 acres of land on the N.W. corner of Franklin and Portland Avenues. These buildings will house both residential and community space. 120 rental units will be available in Franklin Steele Commons. The one bedroom apartments will be 700 square feet and are currently set to range in price from \$386 to \$950 per month. The two bedroom apartments will be 850 square feet and are currently set to range in price from \$460 to \$1,150 per month. The three bedroom apartments will be 1,000 square feet and are currently set to range in price from \$942 to \$1,038 per month. The pricing of units is dependent upon the renters' ability to pay, based on area median income levels (AMI). (1) Following is a breakdown of all the units (current and planned) at the Gateway:

GATEWAY UNIT COMPOSITION	# OF UNITS	30% OF AMI	50% OF AMI	60% OF AMI	MARKET RATE
Children's Village	36	11	25	0	0
The Jourdain	41	0	24	0	17
The Wellstone	49	4	21	12	12
Franklin Steele	120	6	26	28	60
TOTAL	246	21	96	40	89

According to Gina Ciganik of Aeon, there are plans for a management office in Franklin Steele Commons, but no commercial space. Current plans for parking and access include curb cuts on 5th and 19th Avenues, with no vehicle access to Franklin Steele Commons off of either Portland or Franklin Avenues.

Development at the Gateway

The addition of FSC to the Gateway will be one more positive change to a community that has seen many throughout the years. Prior to Hope developing the Gateway, the intersection was used as a through fare to get into and out of the downtown area on Park and Portland, and to get across town on Franklin. In addition to being a through fare, it was also a prime location for violence and other illegal activities. There is a long history of drug and prostitution traffic on the corners. Since the erection of the Children's Village Center in 2003, the Jourdain in 2004 and then the Wellstone in 2006, the Gateway has seen less illegal activity. The Gateway is now more of a destination instead of simply a place to pass by. The Gateway is currently home to more than 300 residents and over 35 people work at the Gateway. The market in the Jourdain brings in residents from outside the immediate Hope Community, as will the commercial space available for rent in the Wellstone. In 2008, more than 500 people participated in classes and other activities at the Children's Village Center.

Once FSC is finished there will be a total of 246 apartment units at the Gateway, where just six years ago the intersection contained only abandoned, litter strewn parking lots. Of these 246

units, 64% will be affordable and 36% will be market rate. The number of units, the breakdown of unit pricing and the commercial and office space that will be available will have further implications for change at the Gateway.

More people living in, working in and visiting the community means both increased and changing needs at the Gateway. Lower income residents will be more dependent upon public transportation and safe conditions for walking and biking, as will commuters that choose not to drive to the Gateway. Traffic flow and parking may become concerns for people who drive at the Gateway. All of these are aspects of mixed use development that should be taken into consideration when contemplating changes or new development.

TRANSPORTATION at the GATEWAY

With the development and the continued growth of the community, one question now facing Hope is how to best balance the competing demands of development and transportation at the Franklin-Portland Gateway. In researching development and transportation needs, one thing became very clear, transportation planning is changing. Instead of thinking about transportation only in the form of vehicle mobility, planners are now thinking about how transportation can better serve all people: people who drive, people who walk, people who bike and people who use public transportation.

Two topics have continually arisen throughout this research; the need for development to include a strong focus on multimodal transportation and transit-oriented development (2-6).

Multimodal transportation refers to all forms of transportation: personal vehicles, public transit, walking and biking. Multimodal transportation design is a more affordable, more efficient and safer approach to transportation than traditional transportation design, which focuses mainly on moving vehicles as quickly and as efficiently as possible (7). Multimodal transportation design prioritizes public transportation, walking and biking. Neighborhood enhancement can result from multimodal transportation design. Residents that perceive their neighborhood as a place that is conducive to transportation modes other than vehicular may see improvements in their physical and mental health due to increased physical activity. Air and noise quality in multimodal neighborhoods can be improved if fewer people are driving individual vehicles. Traffic crashes will likely be reduced if there are fewer vehicles on the road.

Transit oriented development refers to a high density, mixed use area that is specifically designed to maximize the availability of, access to and use of public transit as opposed to personal vehicles. Reconnecting America is a national non-for-profit organization that is “working to integrate transportation systems and the communities they serve”. This is the essence of transit oriented development. The goal of Reconnecting America is to bring about changes to neighborhoods that will have lasting, positive effects to both the residents and the broader community served. These positive changes include an improved environment, increased economic efficiency, more mobility and more housing options.

The concepts of multimodal transportation and transit oriented development follow closely with the development and transportation goals of the City of Minneapolis. The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth states that the goals and priorities for development within the city include a focus on multi-modal transportation, mixed income housing and sustainable growth. The City is

investigating ways to maintain and enhance access to multi-modal transportation options for the residents and businesses of Minneapolis. The City's research on transportation is focused on identifying the best possible way to reduce the negative effects of transportation and decrease dependency on personal transportation vehicles, keeping in line with many of the sustainability goals, including reducing carbon dioxide emissions and increasing air quality (8). Public Works has a 10 year transportation plan, Access Minneapolis, which stresses many of the same transportation goals as the City's Plan for Sustainable Growth (9). Incorporating more and safer opportunities for biking, walking and using public transportation will be imperative in order for the City to reach their transportation goals and should be the focus of community development, including development at the Franklin-Portland Gateway.

Community Input on Transportation at the Gateway:

A 16 question survey was administered to people working at the Gateway, to the residents of the Gateway and to visitors of the Gateway. 82 surveys were distributed to residents of the Jourdain and the Wellstone. These surveys were left outside the front door of apartment units with a cover letter explaining the survey, the importance of the survey and the anonymity in completing the survey. The cover letter also contained instructions on where to return the survey. Of the 82 distributed, four were returned. The same survey was administered to two English Learning Language (ELL) classes held at Children's Village Center and to the Hope Community, Inc. and Aeon staff that work at the Gateway. Between the two ELL classes, 30 surveys were completed and 18 staff members returned the survey. There were a total of 52 surveys returned. Not all survey respondents answered all of the questions on the survey; multiple questions were skipped on many surveys.

The ELL students are part of the Hope Learning Center (HLC). The majority of participants at the HLC are aged 31 or above (57%) and 36% are between the ages of 22 and 30. The HLC students are disproportionately female (78%) and most students are from Africa (84%). A very small percentage of HLC students actually live at the Gateway (4%).

Questions on the survey inquired about such things as living proximity to the Gateway, most common form of travel around the Gateway and worries or concerns about traveling at the Gateway. Below is a table summarizing a few of the major findings of the survey.³

³ See Appendix B for full survey results

		n	%			n	%
Live at Gateway		18	35				
Main form of Transportation				Ease in parking			
Car		27	50	Very easy		9	21
Walk		12	22	sometimes hard		23	55
Bus		13	24	not so good		6	14
Bike		1	2	really hard		4	10
Train		1	2	Ease in crossing intersection			
Comfort level at Gateway				very easy		19	45
very comfortable		7	14	somewhat easy		13	31
Comfortable, but cautious		27	54	somewhat difficult		8	19
Worry		8	16	very difficult		2	5
uncomfortable		6	12				
very uncomfortable		2	4				

The car is definitely the most common form of transportation at the Gateway. This includes both personal vehicle use and carpooling or getting a ride with someone else in their car. The majority of respondents feel okay traveling about the Gateway, but they do use caution whether driving, walking or biking (54%). Many respondents (55%) feel that it is sometimes difficult to find convenient parking at the Gateway and about half of the respondents (45%) feel it is very easy to walk across the intersection using the crosswalk and signal.

Two questions asked respondents to write in the changes they would like to see made to the Gateway. Common responses included more lighting, increased safety, decreased illegal activity and more convenient parking options.

The researcher would have liked to see more surveys returned from the residents. It is believed that the number of people that walk or use public transit as their main form of transportation would have increased had more residents responded. The researcher is also curious about the respondents stating that parking can be difficult. The Children's Village Center has a small parking lot that is often times full, but environmental scans showed that there was usually ample on-street parking available (shown later in the report). More detail on individual questions will be discussed throughout different sections of the report.

Pedestrians at the Gateway:

Regardless of the time of day, the Gateway is busy with pedestrian activity. Poor walking conditions include having no place to walk, narrow sidewalks, poor walking surfaces, blocked paths, no buffer between sidewalk and street, difficult street crossings, poor connectivity of pedestrian paths, insufficient pedestrian lighting, poor signage and conflicts with bicyclists (10). Pedestrians at the Gateway have to deal with seven of these 10 offenses: narrow sidewalks, poor

surfaces, blocked paths, difficult street crossings, insufficient lighting, poor signage and conflicts with bicyclists.

Lighting:

In a survey handed out to residents, visitors and staff at Hope, more than half (24 out of 36) of the respondents stated that they feel the Gateway is not well lit. Ten survey respondents said that if there was one thing they could change about the Gateway, it would be the insufficient amount of lighting.

Sidewalks:

The sidewalks at the Gateway are wide and well maintained. Unfortunately that is not the case for the section of sidewalk between Oakland and Park Avenues, on the south side of Franklin. This sidewalk is not wide enough for two people to pass each other comfortably, let alone for wheelchairs or bicyclists. Not only is the sidewalk very narrow, but the street light and electricity post take up more than half of the width of the sidewalk in one area. This section of the sidewalk is also uneven and has places that have settled and sections that protrude. All of these issues make this sidewalk very difficult to navigate, at best, and for some it may be completely impossible to use this stretch of sidewalk. According to the City of Minneapolis' Charter, it is the responsibility of property owners to maintain and fix public sidewalks. City inspections of sidewalks are conducted every 10 years, but a request for an inspection may be completed anytime by filling out a form located on the City of Minneapolis Public Works website. The city will look for damage that could cause pedestrians to fall and damage that could obstruct wheel chair use and impede pedestrians that are physically disabled. These are all criteria that fit the description of the sidewalk between Oakland and Park.

Cross Walks and Signals:

During the traffic scans, when traffic was slower, the researcher did not notice pedestrians having difficulty getting across the streets at the Gateway using the cross-walks and signals. The researcher saw a mother with three small children in tow, an elderly man walking with a cane, and a woman in a wheelchair, all get across the intersection without issue. Although, on the survey, eight respondents out of 42 said that it was somewhat difficult and two said it was very difficult to cross the intersection using the cross walk and signal. One thing that the researcher did witness on multiple occasions during times of heavier traffic was south turning traffic off of Franklin onto Portland pulling out in front of people in the cross walk or turning very closely behind them. It is difficult to say whether those that feel it is difficult to cross at the intersection think the difficulty is due to the timing of the lights and the width of the streets, or because vehicle traffic is cutting them off.

Traffic at the Gateway

Anyone who uses or lives on Portland, Park or Franklin Avenues can attest to the fact that traffic is heavy on all three streets. Oftentimes there is congestion and less than safe traveling conditions. There are an estimated 17,400 cars per day traveling on Franklin Avenue. Park Avenue has 11,400 cars daily north of Franklin and 11,600 cars daily south of Franklin. Portland Avenue sees 14,300 cars daily north of Franklin and 12,600 cars daily south of Franklin (11). In

order to get a better understanding of what traffic looks like at the Gateway, the researcher conducted 15 minute traffic observations at varying times of day, on differing days, at the intersection of Portland and Franklin Avenues. Following is the data gathered.

DATE	TIME	PEDESTRIANS	TRAFFIC FLOW	# OF PARKED CARS	BICYCLISTS	BIKES on FRANKLIN SIDEWALK
09/25/09 FRI	9:00-9:15 Am	22	smooth	25	13	5
09/28/09 Mon	7:45-8:00 Am	8	smooth	33	14	6
10/08/09 Thu	3:30-3:45 Pm	31	slow	29	16	10
10/08/09 Thu	4:30-4:45 Pm	34	congested	28	15	8
10/26/09 Mon	4:30-4:45 Pm	36	congested	37 (still room)	19	11
10/28/09 Wed	4:15-4:30 Pm	38	congested	32	18	9
11/06/09 Fri	12:30-12:45 Pm	22	slow	20	13	5

Summary of Traffic Observations:

Unsafe driving behaviors are characterized by drivers that do not yield to pedestrians, driving above posted limits, cut-through traffic, running red lights, illegal passing and drunk or distracted drivers (10). All of these behaviors occur at the Gateway. I witnessed multiple vehicles on multiple occasions not yielding to pedestrians, cutting through side streets and running red lights. I had no way of determining the speed of traffic, but it's probably safe to say the posted limit is not always followed and the same goes for driving under the influence or with distractions.

Mornings appear to be the time of day with the least amount of congestion at the Gateway. This is most likely due to the majority of commuters in the area driving north into Minneapolis on Park Avenue, as opposed to driving south out of the city on Portland Avenue.

During some slow traffic times the right westbound lane on Franklin seemed to be more backed up than the left westbound lane. This could potentially be due to drivers trying to avoid getting stuck behind a left turning vehicle. Also during even the slower times, vehicles in both westbound lanes were periodically backed up from the light at the Gateway as far back as Park Avenue. Many cars turning south on Portland off of Franklin had to wait through two light cycles.

The majority of congestion and the more seemingly reckless driving behavior emanates from traffic traveling west on Franklin Avenue. Multiple times during heavier traffic flow I witnessed cars turning south onto Portland run red lights, cut off pedestrians in the cross-walk with the right-of-way and cut off eastbound traffic by turning in front of them or getting "stuck" in the

proximal eastbound lane because they could not complete the turn. Many cars turning south onto Portland off of Franklin had to sit through three light cycles during the more congested periods of traffic. Westbound drivers have also driven in the eastbound lane between Park and Oakland Avenues in order to cut through on Oakland as opposed to waiting through the light at the Gateway.

As I watched the traffic flow and patterns many questions came to mind. How many people get hit by cars or are fearful of getting hit in the intersection? How safe is it to cross the street? How many accidents occur at the intersection? How much road rage is generated by the driving conditions at the Gateway? How much air pollution is caused by the congestion? How would a turn lane or a left turn signal onto Portland affect the congestion? Would a re-timing of the lights be an effective strategy to lessening congestion?

One-Way vs. Two-Way Streets:

During the 1950s and 1960s many cities across the country converted streets to one-way dyads in an attempt to keep up with the growing number of commuters who lived on the outskirts of town but worked in the city center. One-way streets are better able to accommodate high levels of traffic, can handle higher speed limits and can expedite movement into and out of urban areas more efficiently than two-way streets (12, 13). These one-way streets served a great purpose prior to freeways being built. Since the advent of the freeway, a reversing trend has been seen where some communities have begun to convert one-ways back to two-way streets. The streets were still busy and still played an important role in facilitating the smooth commute into and out of the cities, but it was thought that two-way streets would enhance a neighborhood's livability. The basis for this assumption being that two-way streets provide a more balanced flow of traffic, slow traffic down, are more flexible, better accommodate pedestrian and bike traffic and can potentially bring more revenue into the neighborhood (12,14).

Part of the Access Minneapolis plan proposes researching the benefits of converting Portland Avenue and Park Avenue from the current one-way streets to two-way streets. Portland and Park were converted to one-way streets in 1946-47 to ease congestion getting into and out of the City before the freeway system was built (13). Access Minneapolis' conversion plan is currently being considered for the sections of Park and Portland that are north of Franklin Avenue. Park and Portland work well as commuter routes into and out of the city, especially with all of the construction on 35W. Once the construction calms down, the city may begin studying the traffic patterns on Park and Portland Avenues in order to analyze the pros and cons of the potential conversion.

Prior to implementing a one way to two way street conversion, a needs assessment must be performed. Why is the conversion being discussed? What benefits will the conversion potentially bring to the neighborhoods they are located in and to the residents who live there? How will the conversion benefit the commuters? What will be the impact on the current traffic patterns? How will the changing needs of future traffic operations be affected? These, and many more questions, need to be addressed before a final decision is made.

One year ago the City of Minneapolis began plans to convert Hennepin Avenue and First Avenue, two very busy one-way streets located downtown, to two-way streets. This project was completed in October of 2009. The city has stressed that the change will enhance the economic vitality of the two streets, will improve property access, will promote multi-modal use and will improve circulation all while maintaining the current safety and transportation efficiency of the streets. There has not seemed to be much of a fuss from the general public over the change although some of the local business owners feel as though their concerns were not addressed during the planning process. During a meeting held on October 1, 2009 at City Hall discussing the changes that were to occur, two local business owners let it be known that they felt their businesses may suffer do to the change. The biggest challenge they both saw was regarding the ability of trucks to load and unload in front of their places of business. The city agreed to work with them on an individual basis to try to develop a plan that would meet their needs. Bicyclist safety and loss of on-street parking on First Avenue were other concerns that were voiced during the meeting.

Although Hennepin and First Avenues are very different from Park and Portland, there are take-aways from the conversion that Hope can look to for guidance in considering how changes to Park and Portland would affect the Gateway. If the city decides to go forward with researching the conversion, Hope Community needs to either come out in support of the change or have reasons as to why they feel the change would not be beneficial for the community. Changes in traffic must still take into consideration the effect that change may have on the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists. How is the city addressing these concerns? Will there be changes to the transit routes and schedules if the conversion happens? If so, what type of changes? There is a possibility that there would be a loss of on-street parking if the streets were converted to two ways. How would this affect the people who live at the Gateway and the people who come to the Gateway for work or classes? Community support is an important part of traffic and transportation development (15) and Hope should engage the community, both those who live here and those who come for work or to visit, in order to understand what the community would support and what would benefit them the most.

Parking at the Gateway

Urban areas with on-street parking are more vibrant, more pedestrian-friendly, safer and use land more efficiently than urban areas without it (16). On-street parking is more convenient, more cost effective and uses less space than off-street parking. It helps create an atmosphere that feels more “community like” and encourages walking, biking and use of public transportation (16, 17). An excess of off-street parking has many drawbacks. Ample, or excess, off-street parking (especially free off-street parking) encourages solo driving and contributes to congestion and environmental issues. It costs more to build off-street parking than to utilize currently available road space. Not only does it cost more to build a parking lot, there is less revenue generated from land used for parking due to parking lots being taxed at a lower rate than apartment buildings, homes and businesses (17).

33 out of 42 respondents on the survey said they felt parking was a problem at the Gateway. Although in performing the environmental scans the researcher found that there was always on-street parking available on Portland Avenue south of Franklin. Parking on Portland in-between

Franklin and 22nd would mean a visitor to Hope would have to walk up to a full city block to get to the Gateway. Perhaps this would be considered a problem for some. Residents that completed surveys did not seem to have an issue with parking at the Gateway. This could be due to the underground parking available to residents. It could also be due to the fact that some residents use alternative transportation methods as opposed to relying heavily on personal vehicles.

Biking at the Gateway

Biking is one of the many modes of transportation used at the Gateway. Although not many of the residents in the Hope Community personally use bicycling as their main mode of transportation, many commuters coming through (and to) the neighborhood do. Steve Clark, of Transit for Livable Communities, a non-profit organization which promotes balancing multiple modes of transportation by encouraging the use of transit, walking and bicycling has developed and published a formula called the “Clark Index”. The Clark Index is a bicycling suitability formula that assigns a rating of A through F to a particular road segment. The index includes multiple factors such as average daily traffic volume, usable bicycle space, and speed limits.⁴ A group of University of Minnesota research assistants assessed the bicycling suitability of many Minneapolis streets. The researchers graded the biking suitability of the streets by placing them into five categories: relatively safe, safe but not pleasant, unpleasant and less safe, high potential for conflicts and extreme caution required. The researchers determined that both Park and Portland Avenues fell into the “unpleasant and less safe” category while the segment of Franklin Avenue that runs through the Gateway required “extreme caution” (18).

According to Minneapolis’ Public Works Department, there are an estimated 600 to 760 bicyclists per day along Franklin between Park and Portland Avenues. Many of these bikers have opted to ride on Franklin’s sidewalk as opposed to riding in the street and dealing with vehicular traffic. David Peterson, a Public Works Bike Walk Ambassador, stated that sidewalk riding is actually more dangerous than riding in a street with heavy automobile traffic, and not just for pedestrians. Cars frequently do not see bicyclist traveling at pace and will turn into bikers or cut them off as they cross the street. The safest place for a bicyclist to ride is in the street as long as the biker is a safe distance from the curb, has enough room to avoid gutters and is still out of the main flow of traffic. This is simply not possible on Franklin Avenue.

Transit at the Gateway

Routes 9, 2 and 39 are the routes that stop at the Gateway. The week of September 19 – 25 Route 9 (formerly Route 24) had 15,185 riders, Route 2 had 45,249 and Route 39 had 832. Specific rider-ship numbers for the Gateway were unavailable.

There are no shelters at the bus stops. It is possible for riders to duck under the overhang at both the Wellstone and the Children’s Village Center (CVC) if necessary. Although this may work for the riders, it may not be a convention Hope wants practiced. There are several reasons that the overhangs should not be utilized as bus shelters: safety, competing needs of space and residents’ comfort level. Neither overhang was built with the thought of providing shelter to

⁴ See Appendix A for Clark Index formula

transit riders as one of the functions. The overhang in front of the Wellstone is adjacent to the commercial space that is available for rent. Once the space is leased, a store owner will not want people milling around the entrance to their establishment. This would interfere with business and the customers that are utilizing the establishment. The overhang at the entrance of the CVC is the main entrance for residents of the CVC. Transit riders standing under the overhang can easily block the entrance. Non-residents so close to the entrance can also make it uncomfortable for the residents to enter and exit the building. Residents may worry that someone would try to get into the building that does not belong or they may simply not want to have to negotiate their way into and out of their building. People that smoke while waiting for the bus pose a safety hazard and a sanitation concern that affects residents. Regularly seeing groups of people close to the entryway of either the Wellstone or the CVC could mask illegal activity that might be occurring. If residents and other community members are accustomed to seeing transit riders grouped under the overhang, it would be very difficult to tell when a group is there for legitimate purposes (like taking shelter while waiting for the bus) or when a group is there for illegal activities.

Twenty one survey respondents answered a question inquiring about their satisfaction level with the bus schedules and routes. Six stated that they were very satisfied, 10 felt the service was okay, four felt there was a need for more options and only one said that they were frustrated with the bus transit service at the Gateway. There were three specific suggestions made regarding transit service: more Metro Mobility options, more options from St. Paul and routes from the north metro that extend south of downtown.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Walking

For Hope:

Periodically having volunteer crossing guards in the cross walks at the Gateway would be a great visual reminder to drivers that pedestrians have the right of way and that cars must stop for people in the cross walk. Seward Redesign has hosted similar events with much success and support from the community. This type of event is something that could be done in conjunction with Seward Redesign, targeting different intersections along Franklin Avenue at the same time to show community cohesion and a common goal of pedestrian safety.

The sidewalk between Oakland and Park is in dire need of repair. Upon request, the city will send out a team to inspect the sidewalk and will order repairs if deemed necessary. Any repairs (or the tear out and subsequent new construction of a sidewalk) are the responsibility of the property owner.

The form to request an inspection can be found at:

<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/sidewalks/sidewalk-issues.asp>

For the City of Minneapolis:

The cross walks need to be more visually present. In addition to the two lines sectioning off the crosswalks, there need to be diagonal lines painted in-between the sectioning lines. Signage

reminding drivers that pedestrians have the right of way would be another visual resource for raising awareness of pedestrians crossing the street.

The City needs to request a sidewalk repair, or construction of a new sidewalk, between Oakland and Park.

Traffic Flow

For an intersection such as the Gateway - defined by roadways that have a strong proportion of through traffic with some side street and local access, potentially high pedestrian volumes and is controlled by a light - it is recommended to incorporate left turn lanes or left turn signals into the design (19).

For Hope:

The City of Minneapolis will send traffic engineers to intersections that have traffic flow problems to observe traffic patterns. If the engineers determine that there is a problem, changes to the intersection will be made. Usually the change is a re-timing of the lights, but it is possible that other changes could be made if the engineer feels a more drastic change is warranted to increase flow. To request a team of engineers to be dispatched for an observation, you need to call the city line at 311.

For the City of Minneapolis:

At the very least, the City needs to retime the lights at the Gateway. It is my recommendation that in addition to retiming the lights, a left turn signal be added to the light. Much of the City's traffic signal system is out-of-date, based on technology from the 1980s. Current technology allows for signal systems to better maintain traffic control and therefore results in more efficient movement of traffic (20).

Parking

Although stated as a concern on more than half of the surveys, in my personal opinion and in light of all the literature, I do not believe that Hope should make parking a priority. The parking lot adjacent to Hope is often times filled, but there is ample street parking available that requires very little walking time to reach the Gateway.

Assuring abundant lighting and well maintained sidewalks, coupled with providing adequate handicap parking, would be two possible alternatives to providing more off-street parking. An additional step that may help alleviate parking concerns would be to post signage for patrons of Children's Village Center advising them on the availability of on-street parking on Portland, Oakland and 22nd if the parking lot is full.

Bike Traffic

The City of Minneapolis is in the process of developing the Minneapolis Bike Plan, a project they hope to complete sometime in 2010. The end result for the project will be a planning document and a map with proposed bike routes adopted by the City Council.

For Hope:

Hope Community can communicate to the City that they would like a bike path or other bicycle safety improvements on Franklin Avenue. This is the kind of thing that Public Works can later point to when funding is available to say that bike improvements on Franklin have been identified as a need and is a priority to the community.

Contact Don Pflaum at: Donald.pflaum@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

One thing to keep in mind is that bike lanes are usually an issue of competing needs and trade-offs. The City has two ways that bike lanes are typically installed on existing roads: reducing on-street parking (of which there is none on Franklin at the Gateway) and reducing four lanes of traffic to two lanes of through traffic, one turning lane and a bike lane. The latter is typically done on streets that have an average daily traffic flow (ADT) of less than 15,000. Franklin's ADT is 17,400. These issues do not mean that the City would not look at Franklin for bicycle safety improvement projects, but they are simply obstacles to be aware of.

Another potential resource would be contacting elected officials. Council members have been generally supportive of bicycle improvements throughout the city and they are willing to stand up for communities when there is an unmet need.

For the City of Minneapolis:

A needs assessment should be completed for bicycling issues relating to Franklin Avenue in the vicinity of the Gateway. It is difficult to determine what changes could be made without a major reconstruction of the road or sidewalks, but riding conditions on Franklin are hazardous and, at the very least, that fact needs to be recognized by the City.

Transit

For Metro Transit/The City of Minneapolis:

Well lit bus stops and bus stops with accommodations to shelter riders would be beneficial to both transit riders and residents of Hope Community. It may even boost ridership numbers. Bus shelters are generally built at high use stops. Metro Transit should conduct a review of ridership numbers at the Gateway and the stops at the Park Avenue/Franklin Avenue intersections to determine feasibility. It is possible to have a shelter built at a stop that is of no cost to the community or to Metro Transit. The City has a contract with a company that builds shelters at high use stops. These shelters are paid for by the advertisements sold to companies by the shelter contracting company.

Appendix A: Research Methods Resources

Literature:

1. Franklin Steele Commons, Final Phase of Franklin Portland Gateway: Application for Tax Credits to the City of Minneapolis June 23, 2009
2. 5 Years of Progress, Center for Transit-Oriented Development Booklet
3. Transit Oriented Development. Design for a livable sustainable future.
<http://www.transitorienteddevelopment.org/tod.html>
4. Reconnecting America. Center for Transit-Oriented Development
<http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/public/about>
5. Minnesota Department of Transportation
<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/planning/completestreets/legislation.html#report>
6. National Complete the Streets Coalition. <http://completethestreets.org/>
7. Bell, J., Cohen, L. The Transportation Prescription. Bold New Ideas for Healthy, Equitable Transportation Reform in America. A Policy Link booklet.
8. City of Minneapolis Plan, Transportation, Chapter 2
http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cped/docs/02_Transportation_100209.pdf
9. Access Minneapolis Ten Year Transportation Action Plan retrieved from
<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/public-works/trans-plan/>
10. Sandt, L., Schneider, R., Nabors, D., Thomas, L., Mitchell, C., Eldridge, R.J. (2008). A resident's guide for creating safe and walkable communities. Retrieved from
<http://drusilla.hsrb.unc.edu/cms/downloads/residentsguide.pdf>
11. MN Dept of Transportation, Office of Transportation Data & Analysis in Cooperation with U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration
12. City of Sacramento Department of Transportation. Central City Two-Way Conversion Study retrieved 09/18/09 from
<http://www.cityofsacramento.org/transportation/engineering/fundingcentralpurpose.html>
13. Access Mpls retrieved 09/18/09 from
http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/public-works/trans-plan/Citywide_CouncilFinal_Ch4_071709.pdf
14. City of Minneapolis retrieved 09/09/2009 from
http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/CIP/HennepinAve/Presentation_12-03-08.pdf
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16. Marshall, W., Garrick, N, Hansen, G. (2008). Reassessing on-street parking. University of Connecticut. Retrieved 12/04/09 from
http://www.cnu.org/sites/www.cnu.org/files/Marshall%20&%20Garrick_Reassessing%20On-Street%20Parking.pdf
17. DeWitt, J., Peterson, S., Thoman, B. The Myth of Free Parking from Transit for Livable Communities
18. Alden, B., Pierson, B., Sward., Clark, S. (2007). Bicycling Road Suitability in Minneapolis. Received from Jeff Mattson at CURA

19. Hamilton Associates, Engineering and Planning Consultants. Safer City Intersection Master Plan – Model Guidelines for Intersection Design and Operations. Retrieved 12/15/09 from www.city.kamloops.bc.ca/pdfs/plans/modelintersectionguidelinesdraft.pdf

20. Access Minneapolis retrieved from http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/public-works/transportation/Citywide_CouncilFinal_Ch4_071709.pdf

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Interviews and other Contacts:

Metro Transit: 612-373-3333

Rich Moore – Ridership Numbers - 612-349-7664

- Emailed list of ridership for the week of Sept 19-25, 2009

John Dillery – Service Planning, routes and times

Transit for Livable Communities (TLC):

Steve Clark – Manager of Walking and Bicycling Program – 651-767-0298 x 119 or

stevec@tlcminnesota.org

Steve has bicycle and pedestrian counts and crash counts for Franklin and Portland. Steve and I have communicated by email and voicemail. I have requested to meet with Steve in person for an informational interview and he agreed that a meeting could be beneficial to this project. At the time of this writing, we had not yet been able to meet.

$$\text{Clark Index} = \frac{(\text{ADT} / 50) * (\text{Speed Limit} - \text{Cyclists Speed})^2}{10 * (\text{Number of Travel Lanes}) + 4 * (\text{Usable Bike Space})^2}$$

Seward Redesign:

Katya Pilling – Associate Director – 612-338-8729 x 116 or katya@sewardredesign.org

Spoke on phone, Katya directed me to the Seward Redesign web – www.sewardredesign.org for data that she used to inform the recommendations on Franklin in the Seward neighborhood. I did not find specific information about data used, just the suggestions made. Suggested conducting interviews and focus groups, partnering with Seward Redesign for community cohesion, recommended speaking with TLC.

Katya also suggested speaking with

Noel Nix – 612-709-0787 or noelnix@gmail.com

Met with Noel 11/20/09. He has an interest in working with Hope Community, Inc. on future pedestrian safety projects and other community organization efforts.

CURA:

Jeff Matson- GIS person-can look at transportation patterns home to work. jmatson@umn.edu or 612-625-0081

- Accidents at the Gateway and Park & Franklin – received
- Bus ridership numbers at the Gateway and Park & Franklin – not received

Jeff is very willing to help. Sent crash data and bicycling information for the Gateway area. Was unable to gather bus ridership numbers in the time allowed for by the project.

City of Minneapolis:

Paul Mogush – City Planner - City of Mpls Community Planning and Economic Development – paul.mogush@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

Conducted interview on 10/26/09 – very open to speaking with me and offering his opinion as well as tips for the project

Access Works:

David Peterson, Bike Walk Ambassador, David.Peterson2@ci.minneapolis.mn.us, 612-333-3410 (w). Emailed back a forth discussing bike conditions at the Gateway. Very helpful and responsive.

AEON:

Gina Ciganik – VP of Development – 612-341-3148 ext 204

- Spoke 11/02 suggested reading Aeon's traffic study of Gateway (get from Marcia) and the East Village Traffic Study. Has not sent the East Village Traffic Study, it is in the archives.

Sasha Piunti – spiunti@aeonmn.org, 612-874-8867 - breakdown of unit prices

Humphrey Institute:

Carissa Schively Slotterback, PhD, AICP
Assistant Professor, Urban and Regional Planning Program
Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota
130 HHH Center, 301 19th Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55455
(612) 626-3193, cschively@umn.edu

Carissa was very helpful in generating ideas for how to begin the project and for suggesting resources.

Hope Community, Inc.:

Interviews – Community Organizers: Dehop and Chaka were helpful in suggesting ways to engage the community: attending community events and distributing survey door to door. Betsy was instrumental in gaining access to English Language Learners classes to hand out surveys to students.

Evaluator: Kate Tilney – also has evaluation data and numbers

Appendix B: Original Survey and Complete Survey Results

Hope Community Survey

- Check the box by the answer(s) that best fits for you.
 - Unless the question says you can choose more than one answer, please pick only one answer.
-

1. Do you live within 2 blocks of Hope Community?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

2. How do you travel to Hope Community?

(Mark more than one answer if you have used more than one kind of transportation)

- ☐ I live here
- ☐ I ride my bicycle
- ☐ I drive my car
- ☐ I get a ride with someone who has a car
- ☐ I walk
- ☐ I take the bus
- ☐ I take the light rail train
- ☐ I take a taxi
- ☐ I get here in another way: _____

3. What kind of transportation do you use most of the time to get to Hope Community?

- ☐ I live here
- ☐ I ride my bicycle
- ☐ I drive my car
- ☐ I get a ride with someone who has a car
- ☐ I walk
- ☐ I take the bus
- ☐ I take the light rail train

- ☐ I take a taxi
- ☐ I get here in another way: _____

4. What time do you usually come to Hope Community?

- ☐ Early morning (before 8:00 am)
- ☐ Morning (between 8:00 and noon)
- ☐ Mid-day (between noon and 5:00 pm)
- ☐ Evening (between 5:00 and 8:00 pm)
- ☐ Night (between 8:00 pm and 8:00 am)

5. How do you feel when you are outside the buildings of Hope Community, in the area at the intersection of Franklin and Portland (if you are walking, riding your bicycle, walking to or from your car, or waiting for the bus)?

- ☐ I'm very comfortable – I don't worry about anything at all!
- ☐ I feel OK but I am careful
- ☐ I worry when I walk or wait for the bus at that intersection
- ☐ I really don't like walking around or waiting for the bus at that intersection, but sometimes I have to
- ☐ I never walk around or wait for the bus at that intersection because I am so uncomfortable

6. When it's dark outside, do you feel any differently about being at the corner of Franklin and Portland?

- ☐ I feel better when it's dark
- ☐ I am more worried when it's dark
- ☐ I feel the same when it's dark
- ☐ I have never been here when it's dark

7. If you have children, how do you feel if they are outside on the public sidewalks at the corner of Franklin and Portland without anyone to watch them?

- ☐ I am very comfortable – I don't worry about anything at all
- ☐ It's OK for my children to be outside at that corner without anyone watching them, but I tell them to be very careful

- ☐ I don't like my children being at that corner without someone to watch them
- ☐ I don't let my children go to that corner without someone to watch them
- ☐ I don't have children

8. If you drive a car or ride in a car with someone else, how easy is it for you to find a parking place around Hope Community?
- ☐ Very easy – I always find a place to park
 - ☐ Sometimes it's hard, but usually I find a good place to park
 - ☐ Maybe once a month I have to park somewhere that's not so good
 - ☐ It is really hard! At least once a week, I can't find a good place to park
9. Have you ever gone home (or somewhere else) instead of coming to Hope Community because you couldn't find a place to park?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
10. If you ride the bus, how satisfied are you with the bus schedules and the bus routes that you can take to get to Hope Community?
- ☐ I'm very satisfied with the bus routes and schedules
 - ☐ The bus works OK for me
 - ☐ The bus works for me, but I think there need to be more options
 - ☐ I am very frustrated by the bus routes or schedule
 - ☐ I don't take the bus
11. Do you feel that the public sidewalks around the corner of Franklin and Portland are well lit?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
12. How easy is it for you to cross the street at the intersection of Franklin and Portland using the cross-walk signals?
- ☐ Very easy
 - ☐ Somewhat easy
 - ☐ Somewhat difficult
 - ☐ Very difficult

13. If you ride your bicycle to Hope Community, how do you feel about the choices you have for parking your bicycle outdoors?

- ☐ Very comfortable – I have no concerns
- ☐ I feel OK, but sometimes I'm concerned about where I park my bicycle
- ☐ I don't feel good about where I park my bicycle but I have no other choice
- ☐ I would ride my bicycle to Hope more often if there were more parking choices

14. If you have concerns about parking your bicycle outdoors, please mark any of the statements below that are true for you:

- ☐ I can't ever find a place to lock my bicycle
- ☐ I'm afraid of my bicycle being stolen
- ☐ I'm concerned that people might mess with my bicycle

15. If you could change one thing about the transportation choices that are available for you to get to Hope Community, what would it be? *(write your answer in the space below)*

16. If you could change one thing about the area around the intersection of Franklin and Portland, what would it be? *(write your answer in the space below)*

Survey Results:

		n	%			n	%
Forms of transportation used at Gateway				Ever left Gateway due to lack of parking			
<i>live here</i>		5		<i>yes</i>		11	24
<i>bike</i>		6		Satisfaction level with bus service			
<i>car</i>		29		<i>very satisfied</i>		6	14
<i>walk</i>		13		<i>it's ok</i>		10	24
<i>bus</i>		15		<i>need more options</i>		4	10
<i>train</i>		3		<i>very frustrated</i>		1	2
<i>taxi</i>		1		<i>NA</i>		21	50
Times of travel at Gateway				The Gateway is well lit			
<i>early morning</i>		18		<i>yes</i>		19	44
<i>morning</i>		33		Feelings about bike parking at Gateway			
<i>mid-day</i>		3		<i>very comfortable</i>		1	10
<i>evening</i>		2		<i>sometimes concerned</i>		2	20
<i>night</i>		2		<i>don't feel good</i>		4	40
Difference in comfort level at night at Gateway				<i>would ride more if...</i>		3	30
<i>feel better when dark</i>		1	2	Concerns about leaving bike outside			
<i>more worried</i>		26	52	<i>no place to lock</i>		1	9
<i>feel same</i>		9	18	<i>afraid bike will be stolen</i>		6	55
<i>NA</i>		14	28	<i>people may mess with bike</i>		4	36
Comfort level with unsupervised children							
<i>very comfortable</i>		1	2				
<i>feel okay</i>		3	6				
<i>don't like</i>		10	19				
<i>don't allow</i>		14	27				
<i>NA</i>		24	46				

Survey Results Con't:

		n	%			n	%
Live at Gateway		18	35				
Main form of Transportation				Ease in parking			
<i>car</i>		27	50	<i>Very easy</i>		9	21
<i>walk</i>		12	22	<i>sometimes hard</i>		23	55
<i>bus</i>		13	24	<i>not so good</i>		6	14
<i>bike</i>		1	2	<i>really hard</i>		4	10
<i>train</i>		1	2	Ease in crossing intersection			
Comfort level at Gateway				<i>very easy</i>		19	45
<i>very comfortable</i>		7	14	<i>somewhat easy</i>		13	31
<i>OK, but am careful</i>		27	54	<i>somewhat difficult</i>		8	19
<i>worry</i>		8	16	<i>very difficult</i>		2	5
<i>uncomfortable</i>		6	12				
<i>very uncomfortable</i>		2	4				

Written suggestions for changes at the Gateway:

More parking – 15

Bus routes from north metro to Gateway and more options from St. Paul to Gateway – 2

More metro mobility options – 1

More lighting – 10

Better bike parking and security – 3

Less loitering and illegal activity, increased safety – 11

Increased crosswalk safety – 1

Bike lane on Franklin – 1

Greenery – 1

Road resurface on Franklin – 1

Bring in businesses – 1

Left turn signal/left turn lane – 2

Block 19th St access to 5th Ave ramp – 1

Unlock door on Franklin to Children's Village Center – 1